

Appln. No. 09/944,009

Amendment dated January 16, 2004

Reply to Office Action mailed October 16, 2003

REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10 through 16, 21 through 14, and 26 remain in this application. Claims 2, 5, 6, 9, and 17 through 20 have been cancelled. No claims have been withdrawn or added.

Paragraphs 2 through 6 of the Office Action

Claims 1, 4 and 26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Doberne (USPN 3,602,419).

Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Doberne (USPN 3,602,419) in view of York (USPN 4,030,654).

Claim 1 has been amended to include the requirements of claim 20, which was indicated as being allowable in the Office Action, and therefore claim 1, as well as the claims that depend from claim 1, are submitted to be in condition for allowance.

Withdrawal of the §102(b) and §103(a) rejections of claims 1, 4, 7 and 26 is therefore respectfully requested.

Paragraph 6 of the Office Action

Paragraph 6 of the Office Action states that claim 3 would be allowable if written into independent form with the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The above amendment incorporates the limitations of claim (as previously presented) into the recitation of claim 11, and therefore claim 11 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 12 and 13, by virtue of their dependency from amended claim 11, are also submitted to be in condition for allowance.

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CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing amendments and remarks, early reconsideration and allowance of this application are most courteously solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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